(b) a nucleotide sequence encoding the polypeptide as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2;

(c) a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under moderately or highly stringent conditions to the complement of either (a) or (b); and

(d) a nucleotide sequence complementary to any of (a) - (c).

The invention also provides for an isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide which is at least about 70 percent identical to the polypeptide as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, wherein the encoded polypeptide has an activity of the polypeptide set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2;

(b) a nucleotide sequence encoding an allelic variant or splice variant of the nucleotide sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1, or (a);

(c) a region of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, (a), or (b) encoding a polypeptide fragment of at least about 25 amino acid residues, wherein the polypeptide fragment has an activity of the encoded polypeptide as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, or is antigenic;

(d) a region of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1, or any of (a) - (c) comprising a fragment of at least about 16 nucleotides;

(e) a nucleotide sequence which hybridizes under moderately or highly stringent conditions to the complement of any of (a) - (d); and

(f) a nucleotide sequence complementary to any of (a) - (d).

Please amend the paragraphs at page 5, lines 12-29 to read as follows:

The present invention provides for an isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2.

The invention also provides for an isolated polypeptide comprising the amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

[illegible] SEQ ID NO: 2

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(b) an amino acid sequence which is at least about 70 percent identical to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, wherein the polypeptide has an activity of the polypeptide set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2;

(c) a fragment of the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 comprising at least about 25 amino acid residues, wherein the fragment has an activity of the polypeptide set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, or is antigenic; and

(d) an amino acid sequence for an allelic variant or splice variant of the amino acid sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, (a), or (b).

Please amend the paragraph at page 8, line 29 to page 9, line 3 to read as follows:

The terms "IL-1ra-L gene" or "IL-1ra-L nucleic acid molecule" or "IL-1ra-L polynucleotide" refer to a nucleic acid molecule comprising or consisting of a nucleotide sequence as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1, a nucleotide sequence encoding the polypeptide as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, and nucleic acid molecules as defined herein.

Please delete the paragraph at page 97, lines 26-29.

In the Claims:

Please amend the following claims:

1. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence:

(a) as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1;

(b) encoding a polypeptide as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2;

(c) that hybridizes under at least moderately stringent conditions to the complement of the nucleotide sequence of either (a) or (b); or

(d) complementary to the nucleotide sequence of any of (a) - (c).

2. (Amended) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising

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